

GREENHAND CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Rubrics for Handling Motions

The following is a set of rubrics for the necessary steps to follow to properly execute a motion. The format of this document includes the name of the motion, the classification of the motion, the purpose of the motion, the steps that should be followed to properly handle the motion and examples where necessary. Examples given, however, are merely examples and are not the exclusive ways that must be used.

There are general practices that should be followed when introducing business or conducting motions. This is a general outline of those rules. Not all motions require debate, are amendable, etcetera and so this is not absolute. Refer to the rubrics of the specific motions for clarifications.

Steps to be followed:

1. No other motion may be pending to introduce a main motion.
2. Member is recognized by the Chair.
3. Member states motion, starting with "I move...", "I rise....", or "I call ...". Motion should be succinct, and not negative in nature
4. Another member seconds the motion when required, recognition is not necessary
5. After the motion has been properly stated and seconded (if required), the chair states the motion to the assembly
6. The motion is now considered "pending" and the chair will ask for debate (if allowed).
7. Providing the motion is debatable, the maker of the motion is entitled to debate first. Each member may debate the particular motion only twice, for ten minutes.
8. Members must be recognized to be entitled to debate (they must obtain the floor)
9. The chair will ask for any further debate, if none will proceed to a voice vote if allowed (only majority votes not requiring an accurate count are subject to voice vote). The chair will first ask for the affirmative vote, then the negative vote.
10. The chair announces the outcome of the vote, if the motion is adopted or lost, the effect of the vote and the next action of the assembly.
11. If the main motion receives a tie vote, it is lost.
12. If a rising, counted vote is taken, the chair must state the count before announcing the prevailing side, and the count should be entered in the minutes.

The official text and final authority for this contest will be the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (as of September 2025, the 12th Edition).

Main Motion Classification: Main Rank: 1 - lowest in precedence Purpose: To bring business before the assembly. Steps: 1. Floor must be open, no other pending items. 2. Member obtains the floor. 3. Member states motion, starting with "I move..." 4. Second required by any other member. 5. Chair states the question. 6. The motion is now considered "Pending" and is now formally open for consideration. 7. Motion on floor for consideration. 8. Requires a simple majority vote. 9. A main motion may be reconsidered.	Division of the Assembly Classification: Incidental Rank: none Purpose: To take a standing vote either because the result appears close or because a member doubted that a representative number of the members present have voted. Steps: 1. A vote by voice or show of hands has been taken. 2. A member questioning the vote may call division any time from the negative vote up until the chair states the question or another motion. 3. The member rises without recognition, even if another member is speaking and calls for a division of the assembly. "I call for division." Or "Division". 4. No vote is required, it is not debatable. 5. The chair restates the question and calls for a rising or counted vote. 6. Members should be asked to stand, not raise hands, or any other definitely countable type of vote. 7. The chair will count the affirmative and negative votes is a rising, counted vote was called for and will announce the results and then the prevailing side.	Amend Classification: Subsidiary Rank: 3 Purpose: To modify the wording of a pending main motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon. Steps: 1. Motion to be amended must be pending. 2. Member obtains the floor. 3. Member states the motion to amend. Motions may be amended in the following ways: Adding, striking out and inserting (substituting), striking out, or inserting and must be germane. 4. Motion must be seconded by any other member. 5. Chair states the pending question. 6. Motion to amend on the floor for consideration. 7. Amendment of the first order may be amended further to the second order, but no further. 8. Affirmative vote(s) on the amendments proceed to further consideration on the original main motion, as amended.
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Refer to a Committee, or Commit Classification: Subsidiary Rank: 4 Purpose: To send a pending motion to a committee so that it may be investigated and put in better condition for the assembly to consider at a later time. Steps: 1. Motion to be committed must be pending. 2. Member obtains the floor. 3. Members states Motion to commit. Motion should include type of committee (standing or special), number in the committee (odd number preferred), and powers given (full power to act, or to merely report). 4. Chair states motion to commit as introduced. 5. Assembly considers motion. 6. Requires a simple majority vote. 7. Affirmative vote requires chair carry out any requirements of the motion, such as naming the committee members, their chair, and powers. 8. In the case of a negative vote, the original motion is again open for consideration.	Point of Order Classification: Incidental Rank: none Purpose: To enforce the rules of the assembly. Steps: 1. A motion is pending. 2. A violation of the rules occurs. 3. A member rises, without recognition and calls for a point of order, "I rise to a point of order." 4. The chair responds, "State your point of order." 5. The member makes a statement indicating the rule that was violated. The statement should be limited to the statement of the rule or mistake in procedure without referring to an individual or suggesting the solution. 6. The Chair responds either favorably, "Your point is well taken", and corrects the problem, or 7. The Chair responds unfavorably, "Your point is not well taken", and justifies the action. 8. If the member disagrees with the hair's decision, they may call for an Appeal.	Previous Question Classification: Subsidiary Rank: 7 Purpose: To immediately close debate and the making of subsidiary motions except the motion to <i>Lay on the Table</i>. Steps: 1. The pending question(s) on which debate is to be closed is on the floor. 2. Member obtains the floor. Recognition is required. 3. Member states the motion. They must state on which pending question(s) they are ordering the Question. 4. Seconded by any member. 5. Chair states the question. 6. There is no debate by the assembly. 7. The motion may not be amended. 8. Requires a 2/3 rising vote since it infringes on the rights of speaking. 9. An affirmative 2/3 rising vote orders the immediate vote of the pending question or questions.
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Parliamentary Inquiry Classification: Incidental Rank: none Purpose: To obtain information about parliamentary law or the rules of the organization bearing on the question at hand. Steps: 1. A motion of business is usually pending but not necessary. 2. A member rises without recognition. 3. A member may interrupt the speaker. 4. The member states their inquiry to the Chair. The inquiry must be related to parliamentary law on the pending business or the rules of the chapter. 5. Requires no vote by the assembly. 6. The Chair answers the inquiry. 7. Business resumes from the point of interruption by the inquiry.	Lay on the Table Classification: Subsidiary Rank: 8 - the highest subsidiary motion. Purpose: To interrupt the pending business so as to permit doing something else immediately or to lay aside the pending question temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen. Steps: 1. Motion to be tabled must be on the floor. 2. Member obtains the floor. 3. Member states the motion to lay on the table. The reason for laying on the table may be stated in the motion but is not required. 4. Any other member may second the motion 5. The Chair states the question. 6. The assembly may not debate the motion. 7. Requires a simple majority vote. 8. The chair states the outcome of the vote. An affirmative vote tables the motion and opens the floor to new business of an urgent nature. 9. A negative vote returns the assembly to consideration of the original motion.	Suspend the Rules Classification: Incidental Rank: none Purpose: To suspend one or more rules contained in the parliamentary authority, the special rules of order, or the standing rules of the assembly. 1. Can be done when the floor is open without pending business, or during business that it pertains to. 2. Member obtains the floor. 3. Members states the motion to suspend including the items to be suspended. 4. Any member may second the motion to suspend. 5. The Chair states the motion. 6. The assembly may not debate the motion. 7. A 2/3 vote is required. A majority vote may be used to suspend an ordinary standing rule provided it is not in the by-laws, constitution, or fundamental principal of parliamentary procedure. 8. An affirmative vote suspends the rule for that specific meeting.
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Object to the Consideration of a Question Classification: Incidental Rank: none Purpose: To enable the assembly to avoid a particular original main motion. Steps: 1. An original main motion must be pending. 2. No debate or subsidiary motion may have occurred. 3. A member may be interrupted provided they have not yet started to debate. 4. The objecting member states to the chair that they object to the consideration of the motion. 5. No second is required. 6. No debate is allowed 7. The Chair asks the assembly to vote on considering the question by a 2/3 vote. 8. If the result is affirmative, the question will be considered. 9. If the result is negative, the question will not be considered and the floor will be opened to a new item.	Limit or Extend Debate Classification: Subsidiary Rank: 6 Purpose: To control debate on a pending question. Steps: 1. A debatable motion must be pending. 2. Member obtains the floor. 3. Member states the motion to limit or extend debate. The motion may (a) limit the number or length of debates, or (b) require at a certain time, or after a specific amount of time, debate will be closed. 4. Any member may second the motion. 5. The chair states the motion. 6. The assembly may not debate the motion. 7. The chair must take a 2/3 rising vote since this infringes on the rights of speaking. 8. If the vote is counted, the chair must state the count before announcing the prevailing side. 9. This motion may not be used to immediately stop debate.	Withdraw a Motion Classification: Incidental Rank: none Purpose: To withdraw a motion before it is voted on. Steps: 1. A motion is pending 2. The maker of the motion may interrupt the others to move to withdraw their motion. 3. If the withdraw happens before debate, the maker states "Mr./Madam Chairman, I withdraw my motion." The chair responds, "The motion has been withdrawn." And the floor is again open for new business. 4. If the withdraw happens after debate has begun, the maker of the motion states "Mr./Madam Chairman, I ask permission to withdraw my motion." 5. The Chair asks for any objections to the withdraw, if there are none the motion is withdrawn. 6. If there is objection to the withdraw, the chair asks for a vote. "All those in favor of withdrawing the motion to _____, say 'Aye'". 7. The votes either sustain or defeat the withdraw.
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Raise a Question of Privilege Classification: Privileged Rank: 10 Purpose: To permit urgent requests related to rights and privileges of members Steps: 1. Can be made at any time. 2. A member rises without recognition. 3. The member states their question of privilege to the Chair. 4. Requires no vote by the assembly. 5. The Chair rules on the question. 6. Business resumes from the point of interruption by the question.		
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